

Michigan *TimeTraveler*

An educational supplement produced by Lansing Newspapers In Education, Inc. and the Michigan Historical Center

KID'S History

Hartwick Pines

Modern visitors camp, watch birds and hike at Hartwick Pines. But what would you have done if you had lived near there among the great tall pines 100 years ago?

Children's Chores in a Logging Camp

If you had lived in Crawford County in 1874 probably you would have lived in a logging camp. You would not have played video games or watched television. If you were a boy you might have wrestled or whittled. If you were a girl, you might have played with a doll. You would not go to school—there were no schools because there were so few children. Mostly you would have worked.

One job youth did was get water for the kitchen, the barns and the blacksmith shop. You would have lowered your buckets into a well to get the water and carried the full buckets using a wooden yoke on your shoulders. To fill a barrel of water in the kitchen or a horse trough in the barn, you had to go back and forth many times. Your shoulders got strong very quickly.

An older youth might get a paid job as a “cookee” working as an assistant to the cook. You would make a fire in the cook stoves and then help the cook make breakfast for sixty to a hundred men who lived and worked in the camp. It took a lot of time to cook for them. You then set the tables, served the meal, cleared the tables and washed the dishes.

In the winter, a youth might also earn money as a road monkey, keeping the icy roads in good condition for the logging sleds.



Can you imagine having to set these tables in a logging camp—and then having to wash the dishes? (c1890)
(State Archives of Michigan)

The Tall Pines

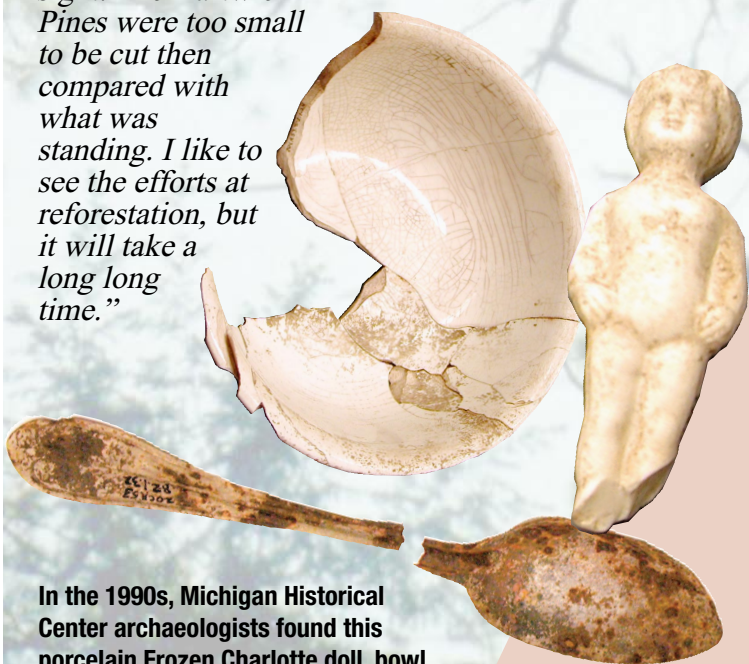
John J. Higgins came to Crawford County in 1869 as a government surveyor. He was living in Frederick in the 1930s when Carl A. Leach recorded his memories as part of an article in Michigan History Magazine, 1934, Volume XVIII.

“Those were better days. There was plenty of work—Hard work, and plenty of game with which to supply the table. I tried it away from here. I made two trips out of the country; always, I drifted back. I had a longing to return. I guess the tall timber got me. . . .

“When I first came to Crawford County, I worked for the government on a survey. That was back in '69 (1869). . . . I shall never forget the sight of those pines, tall, stately trees, eighty, ninety, a hundred, and a hundred and forty feet; as straight as a rifle barrel, and limbless to the top. . . .

“In those days, we had to make a ‘Clearing.’ We burned them, cut them up, made wood of them, anything to get rid of them. Now, even the stumps would be valuable. . . .

“I saw the pine when it stood tall, clear, and straight. As I think back now, it was a magnificent sight. The Hartwick Pines were too small to be cut then compared with what was standing. I like to see the efforts at reforestation, but it will take a long long time.”



In the 1990s, Michigan Historical Center archaeologists found this porcelain Frozen Charlotte doll, bowl and the tin spoon in a logging camp in Hartwick Pines State Park made in the 1890s.

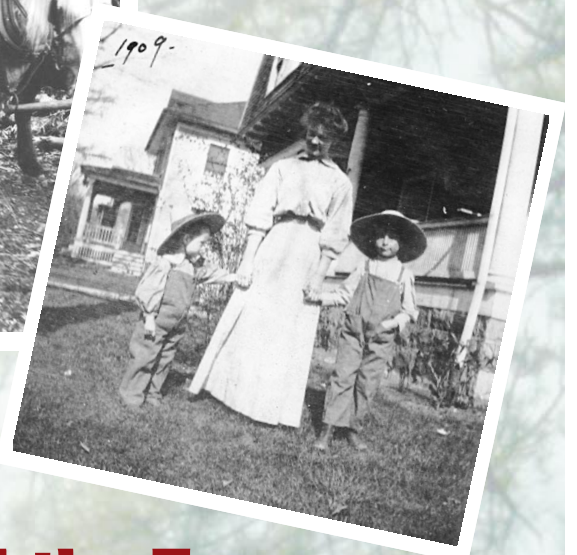


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Karen Michelson Hartwick stands with her two sons at the Michelson family home in Grayling. (c1904)
(State Archives of Michigan)

Edward Hartwick is standing next to the big wheels in what is now Hartwick Pines State Park. The big wheels enabled lumbermen to continue cutting trees when there was no snow—providing an alternative to sled transportation. (c1900)
(State Archives of Michigan)



The Woman Behind the Trees

These virgin pines—80 acres of them . . . are as much a part of the State as our limbs are part of our body. They came into their seedling days at about the same time that Michigan entered into its babyhood as a State, one hundred years ago. . . . Their survival should give impetus to the work of reforestation that is now being carried on intensively by the State and by far-sighted lumbering interests. . . . Mrs. Karen B. Hartwick . . . has enriched us all by preserving for us a thing of beauty that might easily have gone the way of other forests, were it not for her devotion.
—Governor Franck D. Fitzgerald—

Dedication of Hartwick Pines State Park,
Grayling, Michigan, July 19, 1935

Thousands of white and red pine once grew in Northern Michigan forests. Michigan produced more lumber than any other state from 1870 to 1900.

Karen Michelson Hartwick was the daughter of Nels Michelson, a founding partner of Salling, Hanson and Co., a logging company. Her husband, Major Edward Hartwick, had died while serving in World War I, and she wanted to create something in his memory. So in 1927 she purchased over 8,000 acres of land including 85 acres of old growth pine. She then donated the land to the State of Michigan for a park to commemorate the logging history of the region and her husband. In the center of the land that Mrs. Hartwick donated were the last remaining old growth pine trees in the Lower Peninsula.

In November 1940, a fierce windstorm knocked down nearly half of the old growth pine. Today, trees in only 49 of the original 86 acres remain standing. They are growing old and will eventually die from natural causes. The average natural lifespan of a white pine is 400-500 years. But thanks to Karen Hartwick, millions of park visitors have experienced their grandeur and millions more will enjoy the trees that replace them.

Things To Do at Hartwick Pines State Park

At Hartwick Pines Logging Museum, Grayling

- **Saturday, August 21, 7 p.m.**, “Songs of the Lumberjacks” includes tapping, music and stories of Michigan White Pine Lumber Era
- **Saturday, August 28 and Sunday, August 29, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.**, “Black Iron Days” Michigan’s largest gathering of blacksmiths—crafts, music and blacksmith and sawmill demonstrations.

Online

- Visit www.michigan.gov/loggingmuseum
- Tour the lumbering gallery at www.michigan.gov/historymuseum. Click on the First People to 1900.
- Comments or Suggestions? Write to timetraveler@michigan.gov

Hartwick Pines Logging Museum is located in Hartwick Pines State Park, 8 miles northeast of Grayling on M-93. From I-75 take exit 259. A Michigan State Parks Vehicle Permit is required for entrance to the park. Hours: 9:00 a.m. to dusk daily, June through Labor Day. To get more information telephone (989) 348-2537 or TDD (517) 373-1592 or go to www.Michigan.gov/loggingmuseum

At the Michigan Historical Museum

- Visit the Lumbering Gallery. The Michigan Historical Museum is located two blocks west of the Capitol in downtown Lansing. Museum admission is free. Hours: Monday-Friday: 9 a.m.- 4:30 a.m.; Saturday: 10 a.m.-4:00 p.m.; Sunday: 1-5 p.m. Telephone hotline: (517) 373-3559. Visit the Michigan Historical Museum’s Web site: <http://www.michiganhistory.org>



The logging camp exhibits at Hartwick Pines State Park are part of the Michigan Historical Museum System. Hartwick Pines State Park is jointly administered by the Michigan Departments of Natural Resources (DNR) and History Arts and Libraries (HAL).

